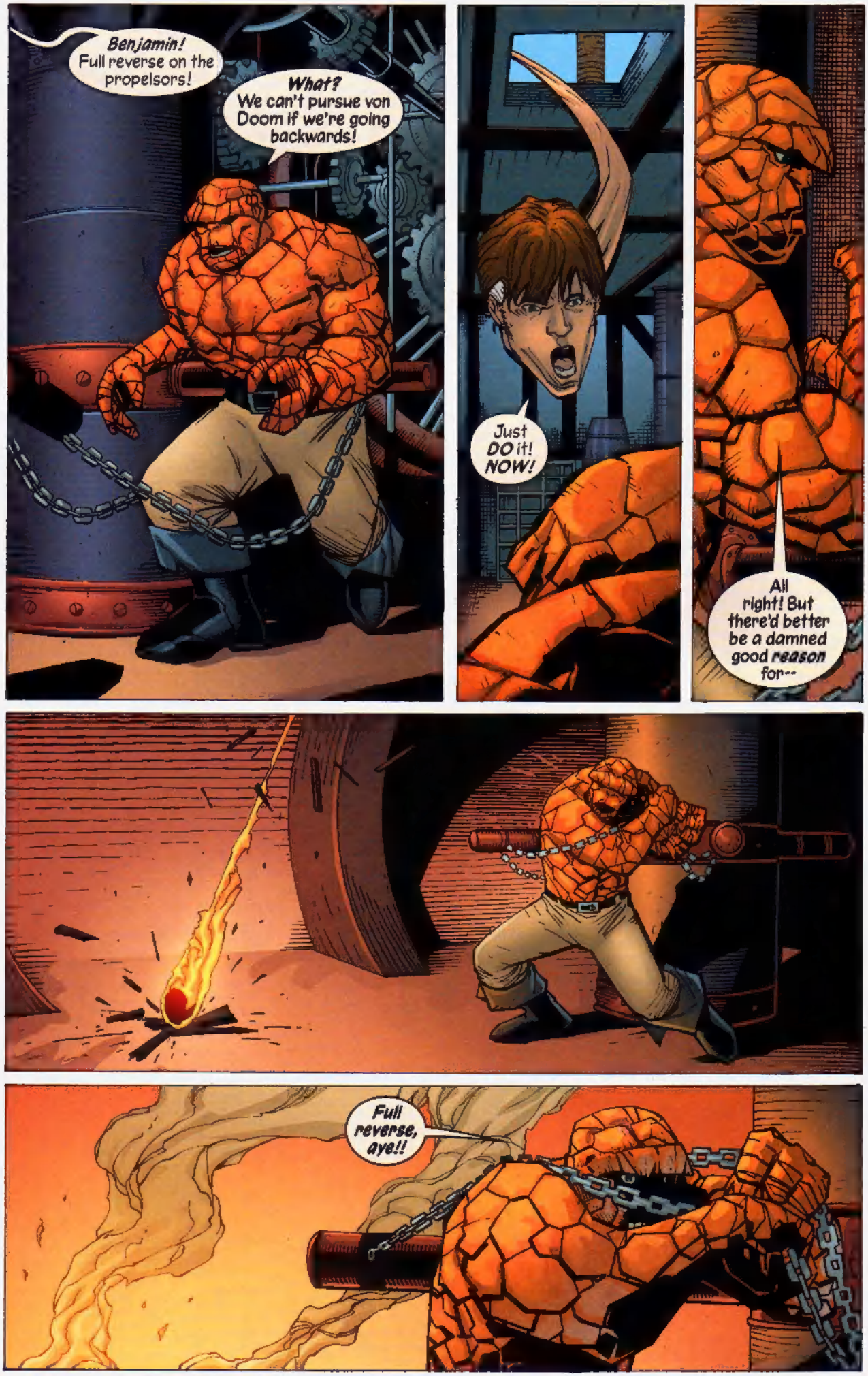

Benjamin! Full reverse on the propelsors!
What? We can't pursue von Doom if we're going backwards!
Just DO it! NOW!
All right! But there'd better be a damned good reason for--
Full reverse, aye!!

John! Get Mistress Evans below, out of harm's way!
Susan! Aid your brother in controlling the damage!
We *will* yet survive this! Von Doom shan't dispatch the Four of the Fantastick with mere flaming rocks! So swears Richard Reed!
I could employ a bit of swearing myself, but there be *ladies* present.
This lady is only present because you *kidnapped* me, you great *lout!* When my lord hears about this...
Right now, the only lord that concerns me is the one above *all,* whom I hope we will *not* be encountering in the near future. Now *get below!* As *far* below as possible!

Ho! Wench!
I am not your "wench," seaman, and I'll thank you to--
I'll thank ye to shut up! Blood and thunder, woman, sort out what's important!
My hands be full! Grab something and squelch yon blaze! Make haste!
Women on a ship. Sue, she's right enough a mate, I suppose...
...but for the most part, the whole gender is nothing but trouble.
I'll thank you to keep a civil tongue in your head, seaman, considering I'm helping you.
And I'll thank ye to stop "thanking" me. I've had a gizzard full of yer--
NO!
Not the RUM, you--!

Wait! Look at the air! It's like it's hardened all around the fire! How could that possibly...?
Susan! Is that... you...?
Oh. Aye, it... certainly is.
Don't tell Sir Reed, but lately I've found I can craft these...these invisible shields.
If Reed finds out, I fear I'll just become another scientific curiosity to him. Don't expose me, I beg.
Well, I won't tell him, if that's what ye mean. But as for exposure, well...
Oh... bloody hell...
Apparently, hardening the air turns me visible.
So we've seen...all there is to see.

Well done, John! I believe they're almost out of ammunition...
Oh... dear.
Richard! It's *too large!* I'll *never* be able to blast it all!
This is going to be close!
It could sink the ship!!
That *is* a likelihood, yes.
Hang on!!

Cut the lines! Cut the lines mooring us to the overhead!
But we'll be dead if--
We're dead if we DON'T! NOW! NOW, DAMN YOUR EYES!

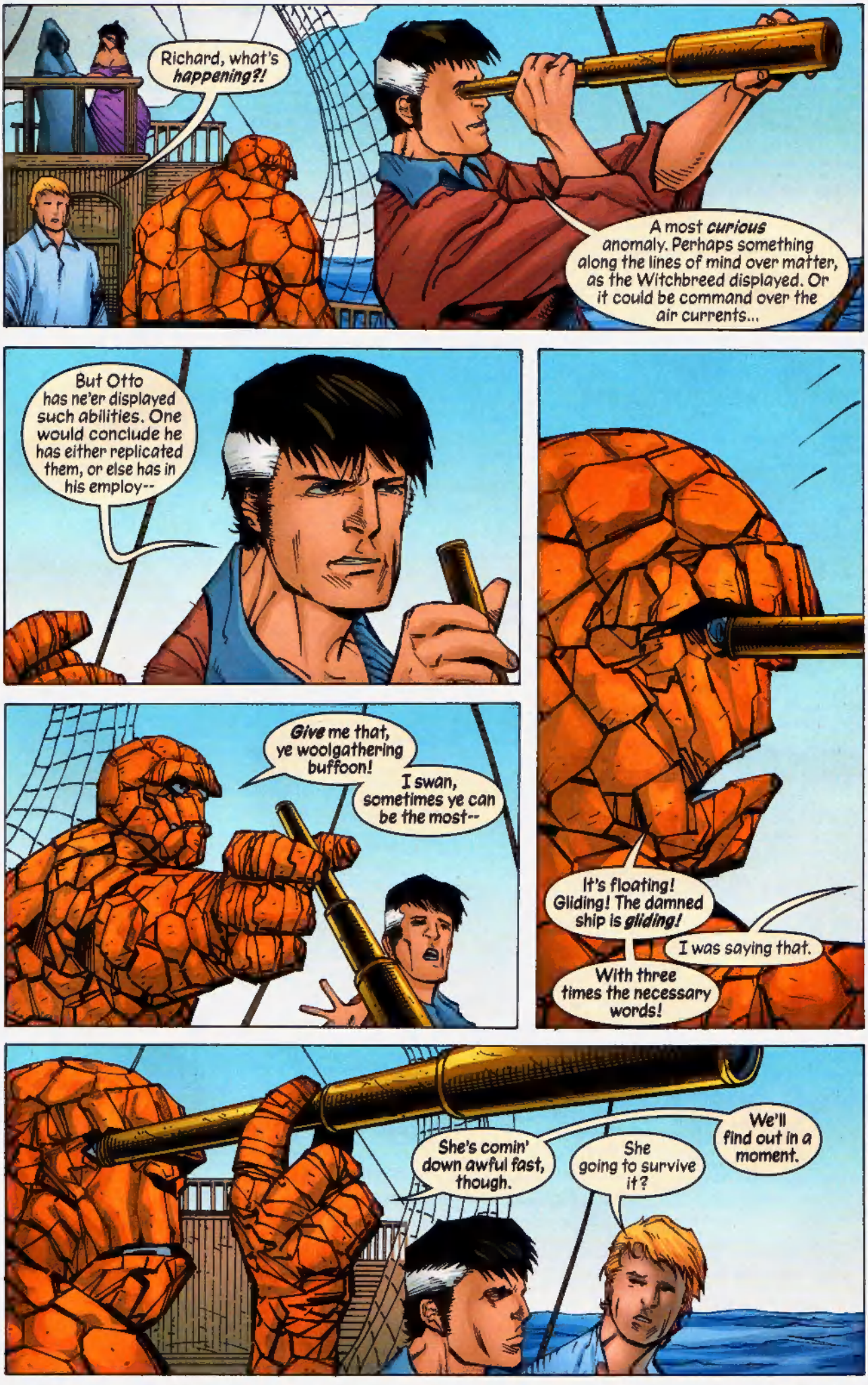
You've boasted of possessing great power, Wizard. Powers of levitation that surpass the ingenuity of my flying ship.
Now is the time to back up those boasts.
Never fear, Count.

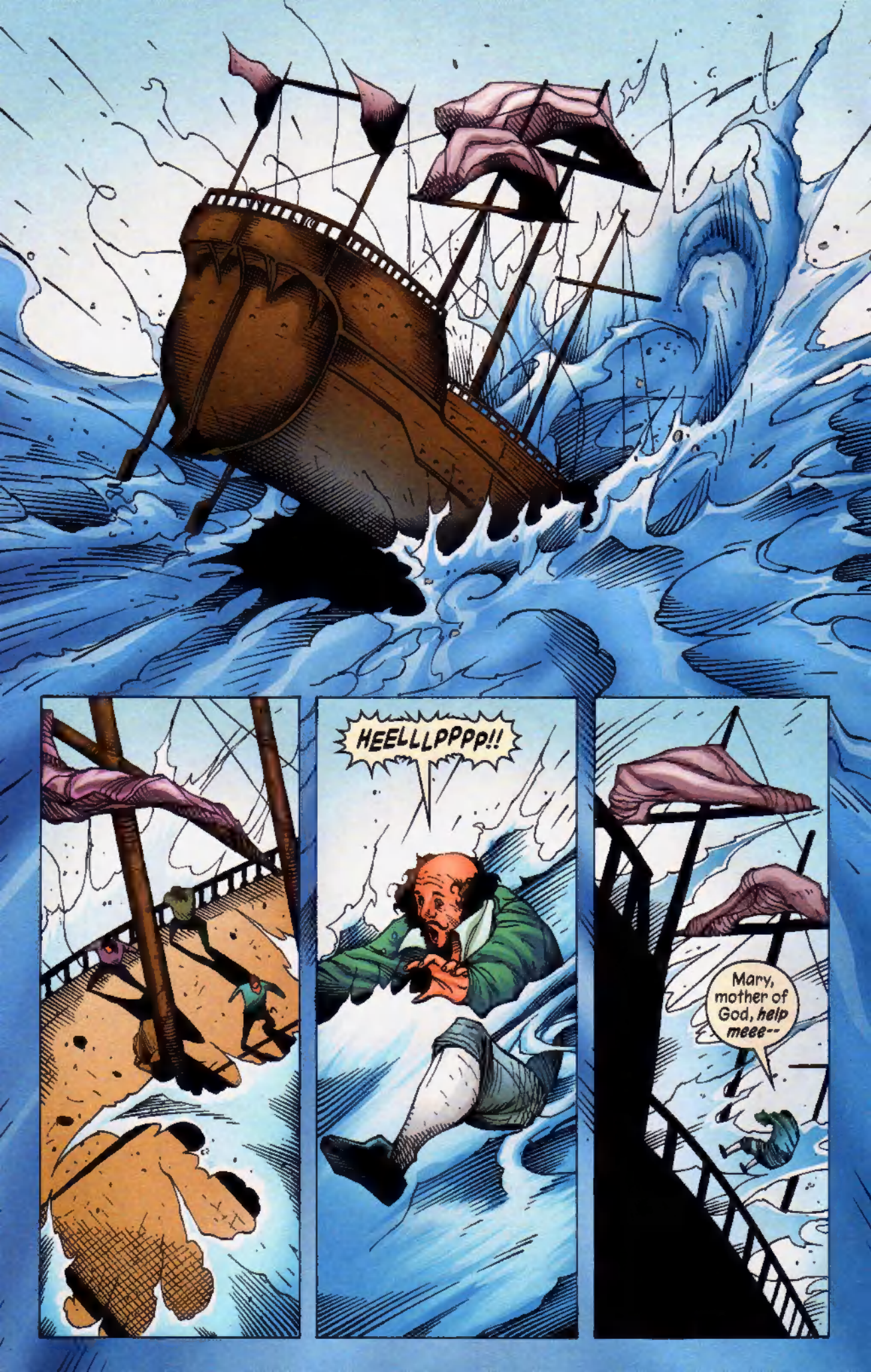
I never do, unless it is to instill fear in others.

Hold on!

AAA AAAAAAAA

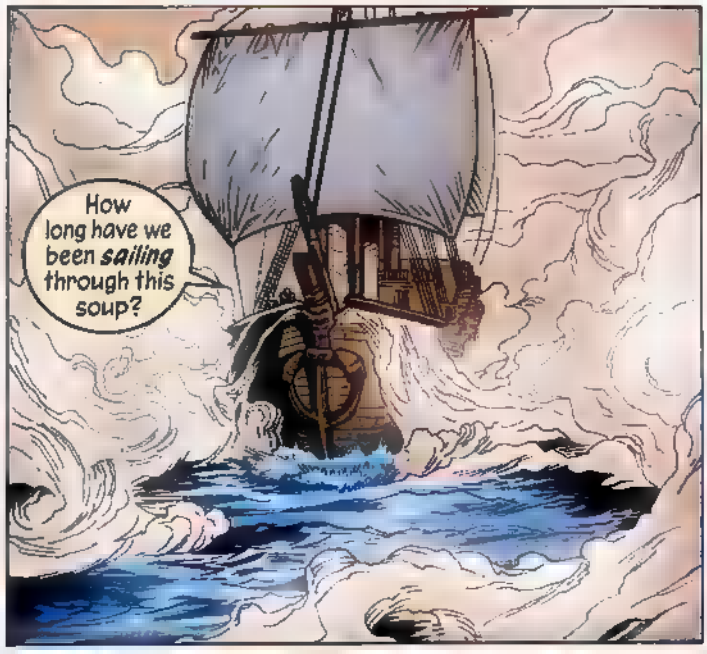
IF YOU FAIL, WIZARD, I GUARANTEE YOU WILL BE DEAD BEFORE WE STRIKE! I'LL SEE TO IT PERSONALLY!
I doubt you *not*, Count. Kindly, then, *return* the consideration by not doubting me.

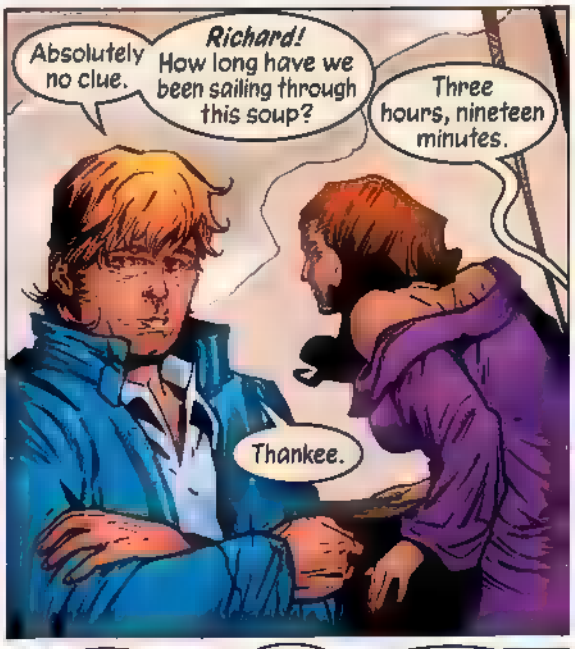

Richard, what's happening?!
A most curious anomaly. Perhaps something along the lines of mind over matter, as the Witchbreed displayed. Or it could be command over the air currents...
But Otto has ne'er displayed such abilities. One would conclude he has either replicated them, or else has in his employ--
Give me that, ye woolgathering buffoon!
I swan, sometimes ye can be the most--
It's floating! Gliding! The damned ship is gliding!
I was saying that.
With three times the necessary words!
She's comin' down awful fast, though.
She going to survive it?
We'll find out in a moment.

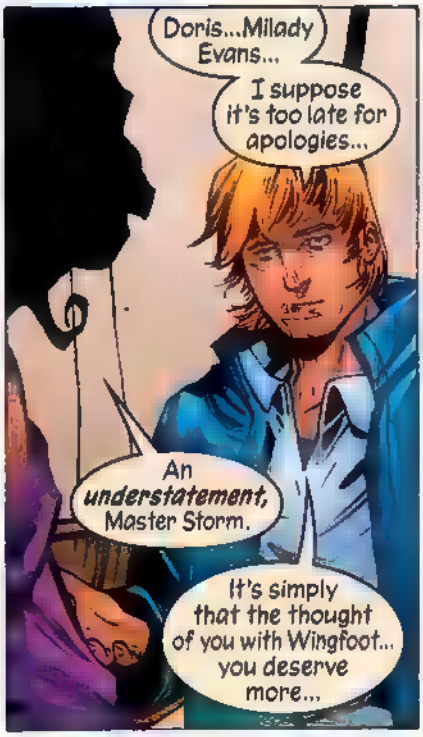

HEELLLPPPp!!
Mary, mother of God, help meee--

Oooooff!!
Nay, Master Shakespeare! You're not getting away that easily!
Nicely done, Wizard. You appear to defy gravity itself. Can you keep us ahead of them?
I fear not, Count. The wind in this region we're entering obeys me not. I sense... magicks at work, interfering with my own abilities. These magicks are ancient, beyond ken...
But not beyond YOUR ken, surely. You have, after all, been here BEFORE. Correct?
Yes, well...
...I may have exaggerated that part just a bit in the telling.
You WHAT?

[illegible]
Something's wrong with the propelsor!
The crank won't turn! I could force 'er, but I'm worried I'll snap 'er off!
And I see why. Stop turning and come up, Ben.
Seaweed, thick as fog.
I could burn it off for you...
There will just be more. Plus it's likely in the gears. You could melt the entire construction.
More, my compass has ceased its function.
Why would that be?
I could only speculate, and see little purpose in doing so.
Unfurl the silk, Mister Storm. If the wind favors von Doom, it'll bloody do the same for us...and with any luck, lead us right to him.

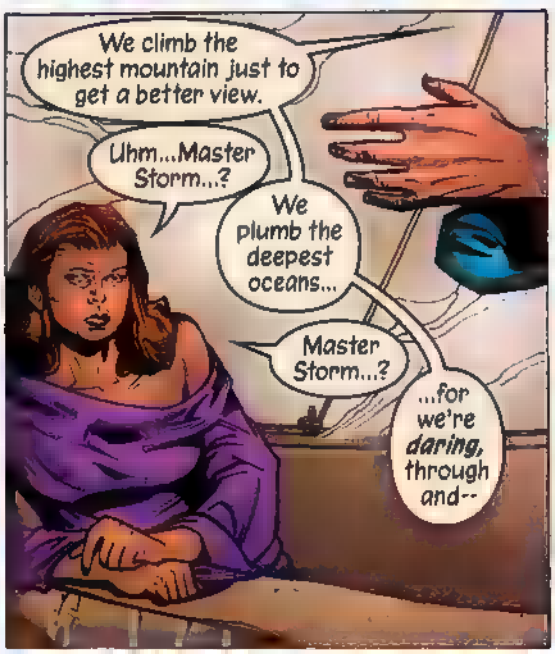

How long have we been *sailing* through this soup?


Absolutely no clue.
Richard! How long have we been sailing through this soup?
Three hours, nineteen minutes.
Thankee.


Doris...Milady Evans...
I suppose it's too late for apologies...
An *understatement,* Master Storm.
It's simply that the thought of you with Wingfoot... you deserve more...

Ah. I deserve *you,* I suppose, is what you're saying.

I don't matter a whit. You deserve *this.*
A life of adventure. Sailing into uncharted waters.
Not knowing what the next day may bring.
Your heart pounding with excitement as you embark upon exploits that others would envy.
Explore the unknown. Discover the impossible.

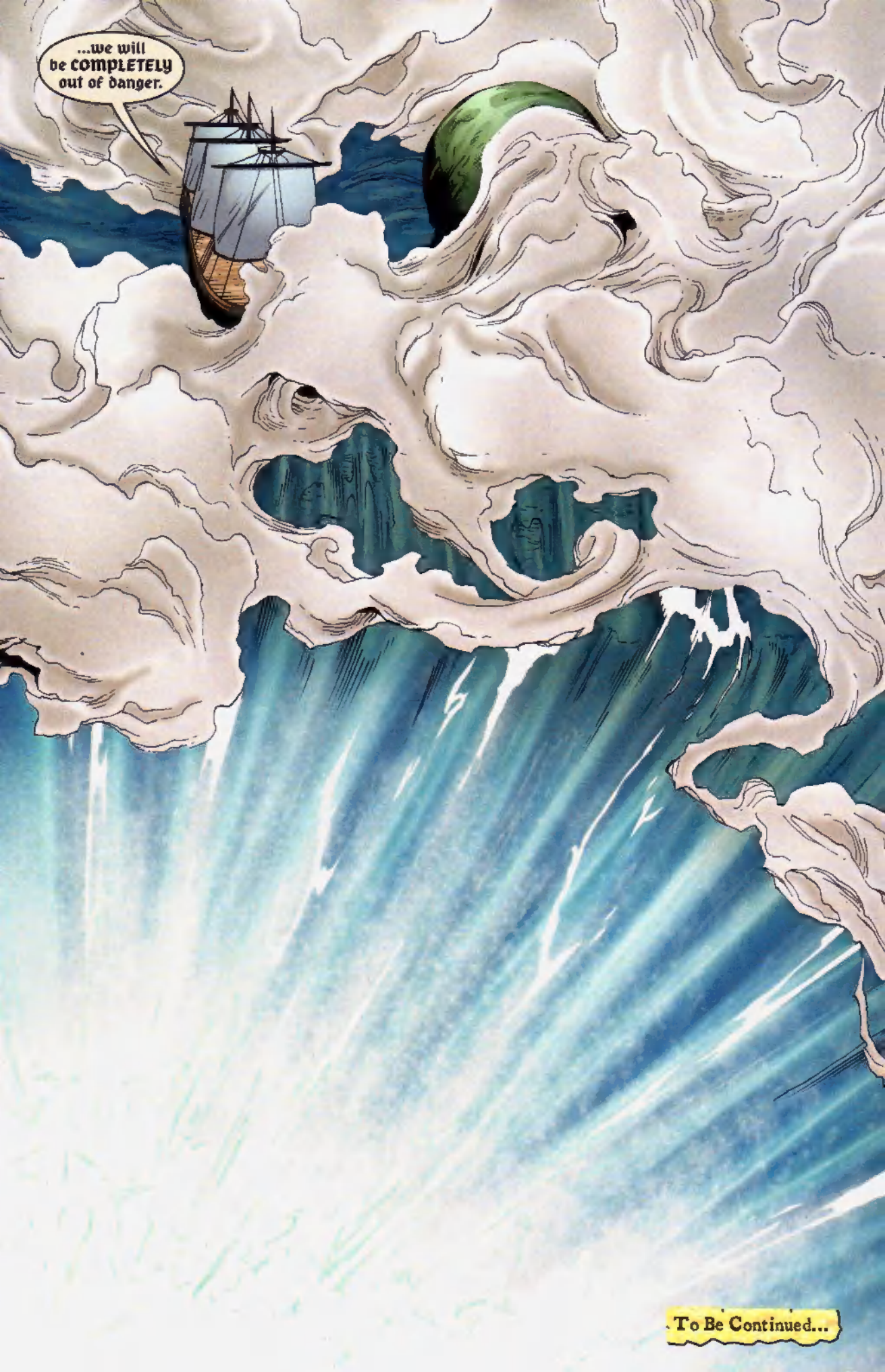

We climb the highest mountain just to get a better view.
Uhm...Master Storm...?
We plumb the deepest oceans...
Master Storm...?
...for we're *daring,* through and--

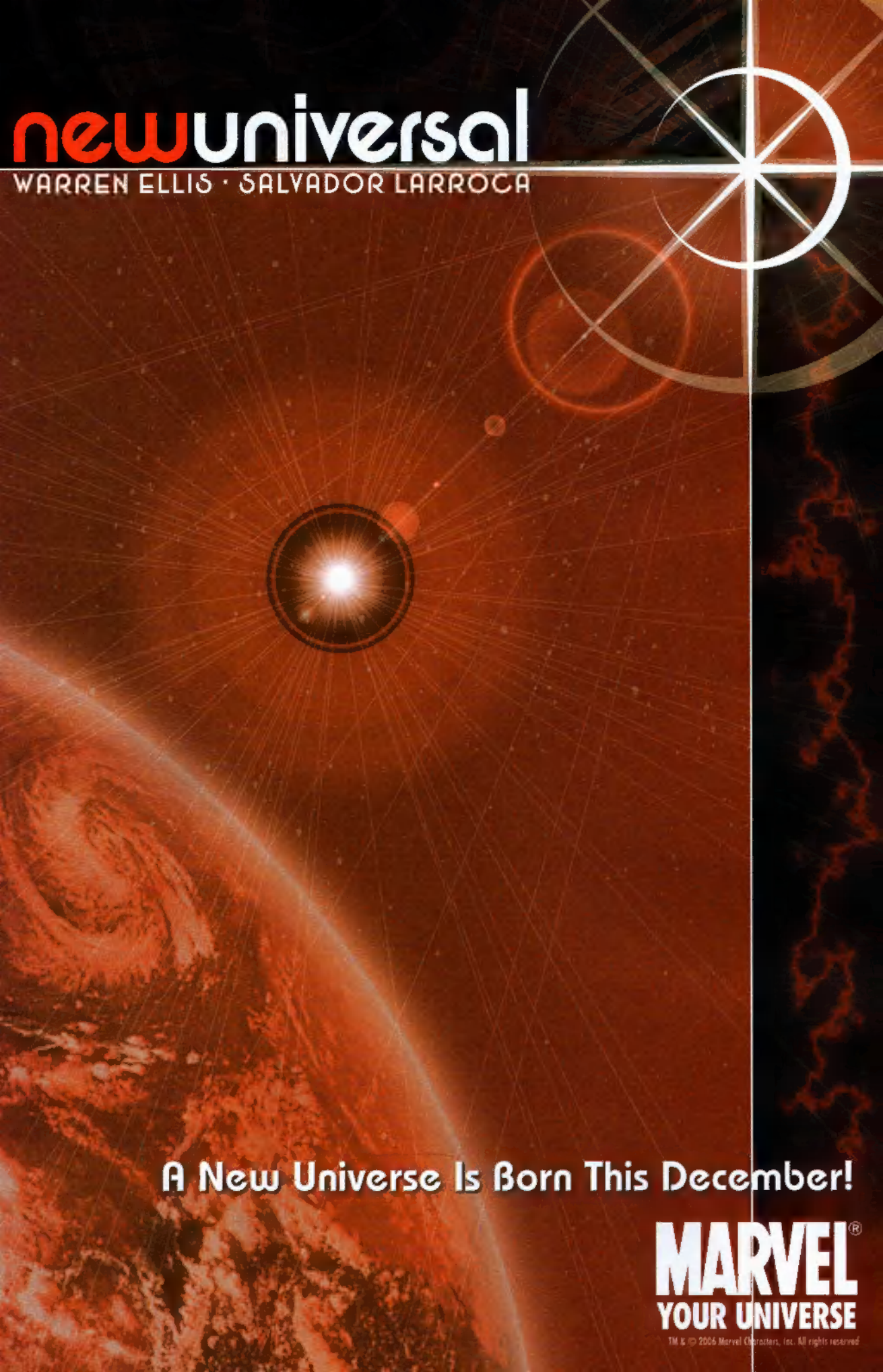
John! Look!
Holy--

Do you hear something, Benjamin? Like...a steady thunder... rumbling in the distance...
Reed! I smell something burning.
Burning? Are you sure?
If it's flame, I know its presence. But it's not from our ship. I think it's coming from...
...there!!
"It's von Doom! Playing dead!"
BOOOOOOM
BOOOOOOM

UNHHHH!!
KRAAAK
PREPARE TO BOARD!

John! Can you stop that thing?!
I can try--!
You will fail...
...unless you have the aid of Madame Medusa!
Take me *with* you, Monsieur, if you wish to survive!
All right, Madame. And you'd better be telling the truth, or...
We will all die more quickly? Save your ultimatums, Monsieur Storm.
Reed! Just beyond that...that creature...I think the fog's lifting!
Now if we can just survive...!
Oh, we WILL survive, Sir Reed. Depend upon that.
I did not come this far to perish short of my goal.
Mighty *confident* for a captain with no ship, von Doom!
My confidence is well-placed! Once this creature has been dispatched...


...we will be COMPLETELY out of danger.
To Be Continued...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